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Activities of the Department of Public Information: strategic communications services

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 65/107 B, summarizes the key advances made by the Department of Public Information from July 2010 to February 2011 in promoting the work of the United Nations to the global audience through its strategic communications services.

Strategic communications services, which is one of three subprogrammes of the Department and implemented by its Strategic Communications Division, is responsible for devising and implementing communications strategies on priority issues and providing communications support for key United Nations events and initiatives.

Activities of the other subprogrammes of the Department — news services and outreach services — are described in separate reports of the Secretary-General (A/AC.198/2011/3 and A/AC.198/2011/4).

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Introduction

In its resolution 65/107 B, the General Assembly took note of the reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information submitted for consideration by the Committee on Information at its thirty-second session and requested the Secretary-General to continue reporting to the Committee on the activities of the Department.

In the same resolution, the General Assembly called upon the Department to provide specific information on a number of its activities. The Bureau of the Committee on Information advised the Department to present the requested information in three parts, in accordance with the three subprogrammes of the Department: strategic communications services, news services and outreach services.

The present report,[1] which considers the strategic communications activities of the Department, is divided into two parts. Part One addresses thematic communications campaigns in such areas as peacekeeping, violence against women, the Millennium Development Goals, climate change, human rights, the question of Palestine, the International Year of Youth, the World Summit on the Information Society and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Part Two examines the role and activities of the network of United Nations information centres.

[1] Unless otherwise indicated, the present report covers the activities of the Department for the period from July 2010 to February 2011.

Part One: Communications campaigns

I. Strategic approach of the Department of Public Information

1. The mission of the Department of Public Information is to help to fulfil the substantive purposes of the United Nations by strategically communicating the activities and concerns of the Organization to achieve the greatest public impact. Its primary goal is to provide timely, accurate, impartial, comprehensive and coherent information to the widest possible global audience. In implementing this mission, the Strategic Communications Division assumes responsibility for devising communications strategies and carrying out communications campaigns on priority issues.

2. The strategic approach adopted by the Department includes identifying its communications priorities in advance, outlining an annual workplan that involves all its components, including the network of United Nations information centres, and ensuring the optimal use of available resources by designing communications strategies with the close involvement of all partners, including Secretariat Departments and United Nations system entities. With the objective of attracting the interest of target media, the Department prepares background press material, organizes press briefings and arranges media interviews with key substantive officials, often individually approaching journalists, to reinforce key messages. The Department also makes extensive use of new media, including social networks, which extends its reach to audiences worldwide.

3. Also, as part of its strategic approach, the Department coordinates its system-wide communications work through the United Nations Communications Group. This Group, which includes communications focal points of the entire United Nations system, serves as a common platform for joint communications work. During the reporting period, the Department conducted a global survey of United Nations communications groups at the country level and compiled a comprehensive directory of communications focal points worldwide. This global network, which now includes 102 United Nations communications groups, is taking the lead in promoting joint United Nations communications at the country level, and consolidating communications resources at the regional level.

II. Thematic campaigns

A. United Nations peace operations

4. The Department worked closely with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support to improve support to the public information components of peacekeeping operations and to generate greater public support for United Nations peacekeeping, including through the following activities:

(a) The Department disseminated 27 press releases targeting 14 troop- and police-contributing countries, focusing on the contributions by individual Member States to United Nations peacekeeping efforts;

(b) It undertook a comprehensive redesign of the English language peacekeeping website, planned for launch in early 2011. Websites in other official United Nations languages are in the process of being prepared;

(c) The Department of Public Information and the Department of Field Support continued to help peace operations to improve locally maintained mission websites. Nineteen sites adopted a new template, with some missions using Arabic, French and Portuguese, in addition to English;

(d) The Department worked with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support in launching the new field personnel recruitment process. This included testing and grading hundreds of test papers submitted by candidates, and assembling and sitting on interview panels;

(e) The Department's annual publication, entitled "United Nations peace operations 2010: year in review", presented a look back at current United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political and peacebuilding missions throughout the world;

(f) The United Nations News Centre web portal (www.un.org/news) carried 1,206 English and 1,022 French news articles on peacekeeping matters during the reporting period. News articles in English and French were also distributed via the associated e-mail news service to more than 50,000 subscribers worldwide;

(g) During the reporting period, UNifeed collaborated with peacekeeping missions to produce and distribute more than 250 stories;

(h) United Nations Radio, working in eight languages, produced more than 120 stories on peacekeeping, including a special focus on protecting women and civilians from violence.

5. In 2010, the Department conducted communications assessment missions to three peacekeeping missions, the United Nations Mission in the Sudan, the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste, which were used to improve strategic communications by the missions. Department staff were loaned to lead and bolster the communications work of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan over several months.

6. *Women and peacekeeping.* The Department worked with United Nations system partners to produce communications materials around the tenth anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security at the end of October, including a media backgrounder and guidance for United Nations officials speaking to the media and other partners.

7. The Department provided communications support for the Global Open Days on Women, Peace and Security. It developed press materials and arranged a press conference around the Open Day event held on 21 October at United Nations Headquarters. The Department also worked with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to develop the first-ever gender section of the United Nations peacekeeping site, which was launched to coincide with the tenth anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

8. *International Day of Peace.* In observance of the International Day of Peace, the Department linked the 2010 theme with that of the International Year of Youth in the slogan "Peace for youth and development". The Department sought stories from around the world on what youth were doing for peace, which were published on a dedicated website, with examples from all regions of the world. An International Day of Peace Facebook page attracted nearly 5,000 fans.

9. Worldwide press coverage included 856 media articles, including from Algeria, Australia, Chad, Somalia, Trinidad and Tobago and Uzbekistan. All major international news wire organizations covered Peace Day activities in various regions including Agence France-Presse, the Associated Press, Reuters, Kyodo News Agency and Xinhua. Television coverage included programmes by local broadcast corporations from Armenia, Cyprus and Turkey, in addition to a live stream from PeaceDayTV.

10. *Election monitoring.* The Department worked with missions on the ground and with the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to produce special communications plans ahead of elections in Afghanistan, Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti and the Sudan. It also issued guidance with background on the elections process in those countries.

11. In connection with the 29 November election in Côte d'Ivoire, the Department provided communications support to the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), which itself became a target of direct attacks and a hostile media campaign. The Department provided the mission with the guidelines for crisis communications management and, working with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, established a dedicated web page on the United Nations home page to cover the unfolding developments. This service in English and French was especially important at the time when the UNOCI-hosted local mission website, maintained in French only, experienced technical difficulties and was intermittently shut down.

12. *United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti.* Following the outbreak of the cholera epidemic in Haiti in October 2010, the Department supported the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in the organization of videoconference briefings with the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). The Department also provided regular guidance notes on the situation in Haiti to United Nations field offices, issued fact sheets for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and kept the MINUSTAH website "live" by creating a dedicated page covering the cholera epidemic.

13. *International Day against Nuclear Tests.* The Department, working with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan to the United Nations, promoted the first-ever International Day against Nuclear Tests, on 9 September. It produced information tools, including a dedicated website in the six United Nations official languages, a joint Kazakhstan/Japan exhibit at United Nations Headquarters, a documentary on the history of nuclear tests and a visual identity for the Day.

14. *Counter-terrorism.* In cooperation with the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and as part of continued efforts to increase awareness of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the Department updated key documents for the United Nations Counter-Terrorism website and coordinated with the relevant offices to ensure their translation into all official languages.

15. The Department also assisted with the preparation of press kits for a Department of Political Affairs/Task Force press conference held on 7 September to launch the second review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The Department of Public Information produced a weekly compilation of counter-

terrorism related news disseminated to relevant entities of the Task Force and posted to the Integrated Assistance for Countering Terrorism (I-ACT) Internet-based information-sharing platform.

B. Ending violence against women

16. The Department promoted the Secretary-General's UNiTE to End Violence against Women campaign, working with the UNiTE Campaign secretariat and United Nations system partners. During the reporting period, the Department was involved in the planning and promotion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, under the theme "Leadership of corporate sector in empowering women and ending violence against women and girls", and the activities around the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence. The activities of the Department included the following:

(a) New press and campaign materials, developed by the Department, were picked up prominently in the media coverage, including in the headline of an Associated Press article;

(b) The Department developed 16 tweets for 16 days, which were used on the United Nations Twitter account, along with 16 Facebook updates for 16 days;

(c) The Department also worked with United Nations peacekeeping radio stations to produce public service announcements on the issue of sexual violence — for broadcast during the 16 days — including recorded messages in English and French by the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of UN-Women, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. Leading local figures also contributed to the public service announcements, which were aired by United Nations stations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti, Liberia and Southern Sudan, and also in Australia, South Africa and several other countries in Europe and Latin America.

C. Millennium Development Goals

17. To build momentum for the Millennium Development Goals Summit (High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly, 20-22 September), the Department worked as chair of the Communications Group Task Force on the Millennium Development Goals — comprised of some 30 United Nations partners — to coordinate the development and implementation of a joint communications strategy for a system-wide campaign.

18. As part of the campaign, the Department, working with United Nations system partners:

(a) Organized the launch of the *MDG Gap Task Force Report 2010*[2] in September by the Secretary-General;

[2] *Millennium Development Goal 8: The Global Partnership for Development at a Critical Juncture, MDG Gap Task Force Report 2010*, United Nations publication, Sales No. E.10.I.12.

(b) Created and continuously updated a website, in six languages, dedicated to the Millennium Development Goals Summit, featuring news and background information, statements and live webcasts, attracting more than 150,000 visits during the week of the Summit;

(c) Produced a press kit for the Millennium Development Goals Summit, printed in English and French, and online in six languages;

(d) Showcased success stories — both in video and text format — on the Summit website as well as in print products;

(e) Engaged the 33 "Millennium Development Goals champions" from sports and the arts — all of whom are United Nations Goodwill Ambassadors or Messengers of Peace — in a social media campaign;

(f) Supported the Secretary-General's Millennium Development Goals Advocacy Group by arranging for video messages to be taped and promoted online and facilitating media interviews for Group members in New York and in their home countries, through United Nations information centres, UNDP and other partners.

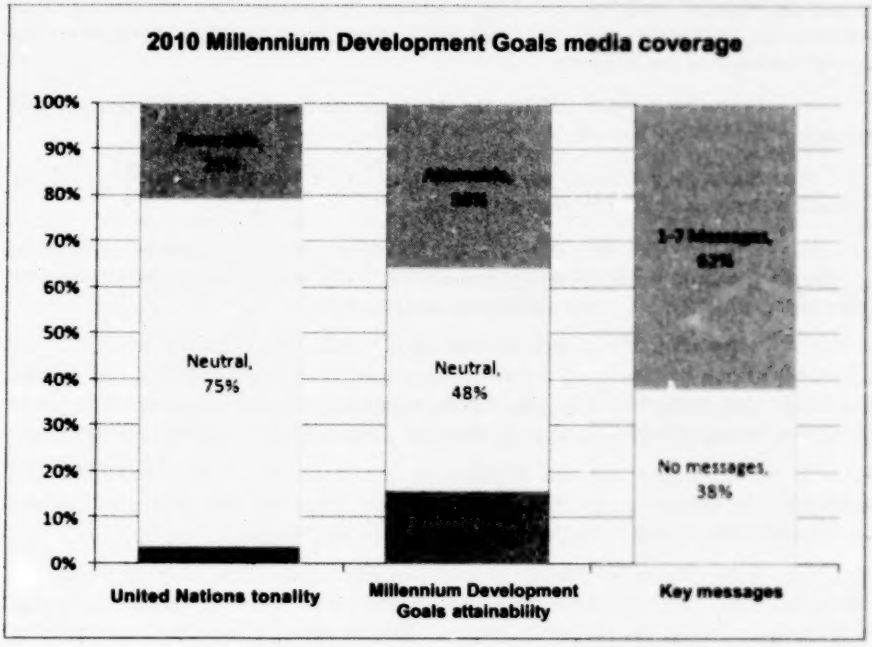
19. To build support for the Millennium Development Goals among broader audiences, especially youth, the Department, often using broadcast, online and social media tools, undertook the following special initiatives:

(a) It facilitated broadcast programmes, including a BBC World Debate on the Millennium Development Goals (with the United Nations Millennium Campaign in the lead); a Public Broadcasting Service "This Is America" panel talk show on the Goals; Al-Jazeera interviews with the Millennium Development Goals Advocates; and a special on-site programming by the United States-based National Public Radio;

(b) It maintained Facebook and Twitter accounts on the Millennium Development Goals, using the agreed "We Can End Poverty" tagline, reaching more than 10,000 followers on Twitter and more than 8,000 fans on Facebook. Over 200,000 were reached through additional United Nations system social media accounts.

20. The Department also worked closely with the Secretary-General's office to inform media of the launch of the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health and the $40 billion in pledges for the initiative, which made international headlines during the Millennium Development Goals Summit. In cooperation with United Nations system partners, the Department also compiled the main commitments made by Member States, United Nations system entities, philanthropic foundations and the private sector during the plenaries, round tables and side events, and issued the highlights in a comprehensive press release on the last day of the event.

Media coverage of the Millennium Development Goals Summit



21. The Summit drew strong and widespread media interest and triggered headlines in major outlets across the globe, including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Guardian*, the *Financial Times*, the BBC, *Le Monde* and all major wire services. An analysis of a sample of 2,877 articles — from the total of 28,000 found by an electronic media monitoring service from 17 to 24 September — showed largely positive views of the United Nations (21 per cent favourable; 75 per cent neutral; 4 per cent negative), wide pick-up of key United Nations messages (62 per cent of coverage included at least one message) and a strong sense of achievability of the Goals (36 per cent of coverage viewed the Goals as attainable, and only 16 per cent presented them as unattainable).

22. *Stand Up campaign for the Millennium Development Goals.* The Department played a major role in mobilizing millions of people to "stand up" against poverty and for the Millennium Development Goals on the weekend before the September Summit. Building on their outstanding success in 2009, United Nations information centres played a key part in supporting the 2010 "Stand Up, Make a Noise for the Millennium Development Goals" action led by the United Nations Millennium Campaign, by organizing, promoting or facilitating events, often collaborating with Government offices or civil society groups. The initiative mobilized millions of citizens gathered at over 2,000 events in 74 countries to literally "stand up" over a three-day period (17-19 September 2010). Some highlights include:

(a) The United Nations Information Centre in Cairo collaborated with the Ministry of Religious Endowment, and Imams were invited to preach in more than 50,000 mosques about poverty during Friday sermons. On Sunday, masses in churches across Egypt were also dedicated to the Stand Up campaign. An estimated

30 million people (40 per cent of the Egyptian population) participated in the Stand Up events;

(b) The United Nations Information Centre in Bogotá organized Stand Up events at several soccer matches, spurring participation by more than 60,000 people;

(c) The United Nations Information Centre in Islamabad mobilized and supported non-governmental organizations, youth groups and students to organize Stand Up activities with more than 25,000 people in 17 cities, districts and villages across the country;

(d) The United Nations Information Centre in Tehran worked with the Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran to hold a Stand Up event before a match between two popular soccer teams at the Azadi Stadium, involving 15,000 fans.

23. The aim of the Stand Up action in 2010 was to convey a strong message from citizens to world leaders just before the Millennium Development Goals Summit. Feedback from the field indicates that increased involvement of high-level Government officials in the events allowed the main message to reach many world leaders. The campaign also received broad media coverage, particularly in countries where senior Government and religious leaders participated in the activities. Some events, especially those relating to sports, were covered live on national television.

D. Climate change and sustainable development

24. As chair of the United Nations Communications Group Task Force on Climate Change, the Department regularly brought together some 20 United Nations partners to discuss a common strategy, develop joint communications products and coordinate messaging and activities, including for the Sixteenth Session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Cancún, Mexico, from 29 November to 10 December 2010.

25. The Department worked closely with the Secretary-General's Climate Change Support Team, including for the launch of the High-level Panel on Global Sustainability, in August, and the report of the High-level Advisory Group on Climate Change Financing, in November. For both groups, the Department created a web page (www.un.org/en/gsp and www.un.org/climatechange/agf) and promoted the launches by organizing press briefings, issuing press releases and using social media tools.

26. The Department also worked with the Climate Change Support Team and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to organize and launch the InterAcademy Council review of the Panel's working processes and procedures, in August. Throughout the year, the Department collaborated with the Panel to strengthen communications on climate science.

27. *The Climate Change Conference in Cancún.* The Department worked closely with the Framework Convention in support of climate negotiations throughout the year. The United Nations Information Centre in Mexico organized a workshop in Mexico City in October that brought together journalists from Latin America to focus on the issues that would dominate the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Cancún.

28. During the Cancún Conference, the Department played a leading role in promoting the event through United Nations Radio broadcasts, UN News Centre stories, and original daily reporting posted on the "Gateway to the United Nations System's Work on Climate Change" website (www.un.org/climatechange). Together with the United Nations Communications Group Task Force, the Department organized a side event on education and awareness-raising in Cancún and helped to promote a United Nations system special event with the Secretary-General.

29. Media reactions to the conclusion of the United Nations Climate Change Conference — including by major international outlets such as *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, the *Financial Times*, *The Economist*, *The Guardian*, *Time* magazine, Reuters and AFP — reflected a sense of renewed hope in multilateral diplomacy on climate issues, with the Cancún Conference as an important step in the right direction. There was widespread pick-up of statements by United Nations officials, including the Secretary-General's assessment of the agreement.

30. *Rio+20.* Twenty years after the Earth Summit, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in May 2012, is an opportunity for a system-wide collaborative public awareness effort that not only promotes the Conference, but also informs the public about sustainable development. To pursue an effective communications campaign on Rio+20, the Department, in consultation with Conference Secretary-General Sha Zukang, has convened a task force that will develop and implement a system-wide communications strategy for the conference, including common key messages; coordinate media events and public awareness-raising activities; and facilitate the development of joint or shared information products, in print, online and multimedia formats.

E. International Year of Youth

31. Working with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and an inter-agency network, the Department of Public Information provided communications support and produced communications materials — featuring a logo with the slogan "Our Year, Our Voice" — and other tools, including a video public service announcement.

32. United Nations information centres mobilized to promote the Year globally, including the following activities:

(a) The United Nations Information Centre in Beirut partnered with the Beirut Marathon Association to promote the Year. Staff wearing T-shirts and caps with the United Nations emblem and the Youth Year logo joined thousands of runners, together with senior Lebanese officials, in a 10-kilometre race;

(b) The United Nations Regional Information Centre in Brussels partnered with the European Youth Forum and other United Nations agencies to launch the year with a press conference and a picnic in the central park of Brussels, which attracted some 300 young people;

(c) The United Nations Information Service in Geneva organized a soccer match in partnership with other United Nations offices there, to mark the International Day of Peace, the start of the International Year of Youth and the Stand Up against Poverty campaign;

(d) The United Nations Information Centre in Moscow partnered with the Foundation for Internet Development to hold a video competition and screening as well as poster exhibition on the theme of "Safe Internet for children";

(e) The United Nations Office in Tashkent, in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund and the youth organization "Kelajak Ovozi" (The Future Voice), launched the Youth Year by organizing an award ceremony for winners in different youth-related categories.

33. In November, the Department organized a press conference at which United States actress Monique Coleman was appointed as a United Nations Youth Champion. Information centres are being mobilized to support a world tour Ms. Coleman is undertaking to impact youth across the globe.

F. Follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society

34. The Department has continued to promote the implementation of the conclusions of the World Summit on the Information Society by helping to promote the Global Alliance for Information and Communications Technologies and Development. The Department also provided support to the fifth annual meeting of the Internet Governance Forum, held in Vilnius, from 14 to 17 September 2010.

G. Question of Palestine

35. As part of its special information programme on the question of Palestine, the Department, in cooperation with the Government of Portugal, organized the eighteenth International Media Seminar on Peace in the Middle East, held in Lisbon on 22 and 23 July 2010. The Seminar focused on the role of the media, particularly new media, in advancing the Middle East peace process. The Seminar involved over 100 participants — 29 of them Israelis and Palestinians — including current and former policymakers, Government officials, civil society representatives and academics, in addition to journalists.

36. In order to strengthen the skills and capacity of young Palestinian journalists and expose them to the work of the United Nations, especially its various activities and programmes affecting the lives of the people in their region, a five-week training programme for Palestinian media practitioners was conducted from 8 November to 10 December 2010. Eight Palestinian journalists, including six women, participated. Week-long trips to Washington, D.C., and Geneva were organized, which included visits to media organizations and meetings with key officials. The Department produced a feature short film about the programme, which will be used to promote the programme. In a survey conducted at the end of the programme, most participants indicated their overall satisfaction.

37. In commemoration of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, which was observed on 29 November 2010, the Department undertook several activities, including the display of the permanent exhibit on the question of Palestine during the meetings at United Nations Headquarters.

H. Decolonization

38. In commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the Department provided communications support to the Decolonization Unit of the Department of Political Affairs in order to promote the special event that took place in the General Assembly Hall on 14 December 2010. In that connection, the Department produced 300 press kits and a compilation of historical footage of General Assembly sessions on decolonization dating back to the 1960s.

I. Human rights

39. To recognize the work of human rights defenders who act to end discrimination, the Department's network of information centres undertook close to 30 events for Human Rights Day 2010, ranging from radio programmes for students in Slovakia to public debates in Egypt and exhibits in Madagascar. In support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights "Speak Up, Stop Discrimination" campaign, the Department facilitated obtaining the rights to the use of the Bob Marley song *Get Up, Stand Up* for the year-long campaign and initiated discussions for the performance of the song by his son, Ky-Mani Marley, at the main event at United Nations Headquarters.

40. The Department extensively used its Twitter account to promote press conferences and reports of the special rapporteurs on human rights issues presenting to the Third Committee of the General Assembly in October, with two to three messages posted each day over two weeks. Twitter was also utilized as a promotional tool, with nine tweets on human rights from the United Nations account (www.twitter.com/un) in the lead up to Human Rights Day 2010. On average, every tweet received 460 clicks, or seven times the average number of clicks per tweet. Furthermore, every tweet received about 60 retweets or twice the average retweet rate.

J. Outreach programme on the Rwanda genocide and the United Nations

41. A new publication entitled "Tugire Ubumwe, Let's Unite!", produced by the Department, is aimed at youth and teaches lessons of ethnic tolerance and reconciliation, using the situation of Rwanda as an example. The publication, which will be officially launched in April 2011, will be used for educational purposes in line with the mandate to "mobilize civil society for Rwanda genocide victim remembrance and education in order to help prevent future acts of genocide".

42. The "Lessons from Rwanda" exhibit continued to be in popular demand in 2010, with showings in Burundi, Colombia, Madagascar, Mexico, Morocco and Zambia, as well as three showings throughout India, facilitated by the United Nations Information Centre in New Delhi, including one in the north-eastern region of Assam. Within Rwanda, the exhibit was shown at six locations (four universities, a demobilization and reintegration centre and the Nkumba Peace and Reconciliation Centre) as part of the programme's partnership with the Information Officer of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Kigali. It is estimated that close to

9,000 students, ex-combatants and community leaders visited the exhibits in Rwanda.

K. New Partnership for Africa's Development

43. The Department continued to strengthen and expand its advocacy activities on Africa, focusing global attention to the issues critical to the continent's development by promoting the aims of the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency and publicizing its achievements. In doing this, the Department worked in close collaboration with the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa and the Economic Commission for Africa. Examples of these activities included the following:

(a) In September, the Department organized a press briefing in New York for the Chief Executive Officer of the NEPAD secretariat, as well as the launch of two reports of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, entitled "Africa's cooperation with new and emerging development partners" and "2010 mutual review of development effectiveness in Africa", issued in conjunction with the Economic Commission for Africa and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development;

(b) In June 2010, the Department participated in a brainstorming workshop in Dakar, organized by the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa, to identify ways of raising public awareness of NEPAD activities. In November 2010, the Department participated in the annual meeting of the Mechanism in Addis Ababa.

44. The Department's quarterly magazine, *Africa Renewal* (www.un.org/Africarenewal), continued to provide the basis for much of the Department's work in promoting NEPAD. Starting with the August 2010 issue, the magazine was redesigned for a more contemporary look. Among the major articles published were an interview with the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Africa, several on the Millennium Development Goals and a series on peace and security issues in Africa. Articles were also disseminated in the following ways:

(a) Between July 2010 and December 2010, short feature stories in *Africa Renewal* were published 157 times in 90 different media in 37 countries in Africa and around the world. The article entitled "Africa's uphill climb to the MDGs" was the most popular, published 48 times. Between July and December 2010, the most viewed articles on *Africa Renewal Online* — which features an electronic version of the magazine as well as additional material on Africa from the United Nations system — were "Famine spreads across Africa" (9,323 page views), "Sexual violence, an invisible war crime" (7,775 page views) and "Seeking peace with justice in Uganda" (6,538 page views).

(b) The number of visitors to *Africa Renewal Online* grew from an average of 30,000 visitors per month in July 2010 to about 40,000 per month in December 2010. The Department continues to expand its social media activities for *Africa Renewal*, and created Flickr and YouTube accounts where photos and videos are re-posted and shared. The Department also started, in November 2010, an e-newsletter, which provides a brief overview of new content on *Africa Renewal Online*.

***Africa Renewal Online*: number of visitors and page views**

Period in 2010	*Number of visitors*	*Number of page views*
July	23 766	32 573
August	28 934	40 450
September	37 276	51 021
October	47 797	64 039
November	52 061	68 198
December	40 014	53 637

III. A culture of evaluation

45. As part of its commitment to a culture of evaluation, the Department has continued its ongoing efforts to evaluate programme outcomes by soliciting input from target audiences and systematically assessing media coverage of United Nations activities. These assessments help programme managers to continuously improve their communications campaigns, activities and programmes. In order to fully capture the impact of communications programmes, the Department tracks and analyses long-term trends in user feedback and media coverage.

46. The analysis of media coverage on the Millennium Development Goals has shown that a decade after its creation, the term "Millennium Development Goals" has been fully recognized and incorporated by the global media. This is a clear change from the situation five years ago, when the Millennium Development Goals "brand" was widely considered too complex to be a useful communications tool.

47. These and other lessons learned gained through programme evaluation have been used to shape communications strategies and to improve activities. In addition to using survey data, content analysis and other well-established data-collection methods, the Department aims to continuously improve its analysis tools and adapt to a changing communications field. For example, in the coming months, the Department will seek the input of industry experts in order to ensure it has the best possible tracking tools in place to measure the effectiveness of new media campaigns.

Part Two: The network of United Nations information centres

I. Background

1. The global network of United Nations information centres — which comprises 57 United Nations information centres, 2 information services, 1 regional information centre and 8 information components of United Nations offices — continued to disseminate information on the work of the United Nations worldwide and to act as the "public face and voice" of the Organization in the locations they serve. They adapted the overall United Nations communications priorities into local communications strategies aimed at local audiences in local languages.

II. Engaging local audiences worldwide

A. Communicating in local languages

2. At present, United Nations information centres have the capacity to work in 48 languages, including the 6 official languages, 37 non-official national languages and 5 indigenous languages, truly epitomizing the multilingualism of the United Nations. To date, the information centres have produced information material on the United Nations in over 150 languages. They also maintain websites in 29 languages. Activities undertaken by United Nations information centres include the following:

(a) The United Nations Regional Information Centre in Brussels alone maintains websites in 13 languages. In addition, the Centre publishes its monthly magazines and newsletters in English, French, German and Portuguese. Supported by a generous contribution from the Government of Portugal, the regional centre's Portuguese Desk routinely translates the Secretary-General's messages and other important information materials into Portuguese and shares them with other United Nations offices in Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America;

(b) The United Nations Information Service in Vienna maintains its website in five languages: English, German, Hungarian, Slovak and Slovenian. Local language information materials produced by the Service included the Hungarian, Slovak and Slovenian language versions of the brochure entitled "30 Ways the United Nations in Vienna Makes a Difference";

(c) The United Nations Information Centre in Rio de Janeiro has also made a special effort to provide more information in Portuguese for the world's growing Portuguese-speaking community. In November 2010, the Centre launched a new website in Portuguese dedicated to Haiti, with background information on the activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Haiti and the United Nations system in Haiti, the humanitarian situation in the country and the work of Brazilians serving there, along with news on the latest developments.

3. *International Day of Nowruz*. The Day was celebrated by five United Nations information centres in Asia and Europe — Ankara, Baku, Brussels, Tehran and Warsaw — helping to raise awareness of the spring festival of Persian origin by disseminating the Secretary-General's message in the Azeri, Greek, Persian, Polish, and Turkish languages.

B. The United Nations Information Centre in Luanda: an information centre for Lusophone countries in Africa

4. The establishment of the United Nations Information Centre in Luanda will further strengthen the ability of the United Nations to engage Portuguese-speaking audiences throughout Africa. In this connection, representatives of the Department and of the United Nations Development Programme Country Office in Angola have had further discussions with officials from the Government of Angola with regard to the establishment of the centre, including the preparation of a host country agreement. Some of the initial steps involved in the creation of this office have now been addressed, including the classification of posts and the allocation of funds by the Government of Angola for the construction of premises for the new centre. It is hoped that construction can be completed and the centre can be operational by the end of the year.

C. Expanding United Nations information centre outreach

5. The Department recognizes that United Nations information centre outreach activities do not extend to all Member States. It is exploring how it might extend coverage to some which could be considered within the responsibilities of nearby offices. However, without the financial support that would be needed to cover additional posts, translation and printing in additional languages or travel to the countries concerned, the limited resources at the Department's disposal, both for the current biennium as well as what is anticipated for the next, preclude any meaningful improvement in this regard.

III. Placement of op-eds by United Nations information centres

6. United Nations information centres continued to reach local audiences through media outlets, arranging placement of op-eds by the Secretary-General and other senior officials. For example, the Secretary-General's op-ed entitled "Standing at Ground Zero" was placed in 23 media outlets in 19 countries, and his op-ed entitled "Don't wait for disaster" was placed in 27 media outlets in 25 countries.

IV. Local radio and television broadcasts

7. The United Nations Information Centre in Buenos Aires was instrumental in having the Radio Nacional de Argentina (the State-owned national radio) broadcast United Nations news programmes in Spanish produced by United Nations Radio on a daily basis. The programme, issued as part of "Panorama Nacional de Noticias" (National News Overview), is broadcast through Argentina's National Radio AM band station and its 37 local channels countrywide. The programmes "Cardinal Points" and "Women in the World" are also aired by Argentina's National Radio every Sunday morning under the title "United Nations Reports".

8. The United Nations Information Centre in Ouagadougou, in connection with the celebration of United Nations Day, arranged a 30-minute television programme in which the video of the song *8 Goals for Africa* and three "UN in Action" programmes about United Nations activities in the areas of peace, development and

human rights were inserted in the programme aired by the national broadcaster, with an audience of approximately 14 million people.

V. Innovative outreach at the local level and beyond

9. To bring information about the priority concerns of the United Nations closer to the people served by the Organization, many information centres engaged a range of partners and developed innovative programmes. Examples of these include the following:

(a) The United Nations Regional Information Centre in Brussels, in cooperation with the presidency of the European Union, organized a Europe-wide advertisement competition entitled "Unleash your creativity against poverty" as part of the Europe-wide campaign to promote the Millennium Development Goals. Over 2,000 entries from 34 countries were submitted and the winner was given the Spanish Presidency award by Queen Sofia of Spain at a ceremony in Madrid in September 2010;

(b) The United Nations Information Centre in Mexico City, working with the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, organized a workshop from 19 to 21 October for journalists from Latin America and the Caribbean in preparation for the United Nations Climate Change Conference, held later in the year in Cancún. The workshop was attended by 50 representatives of key media in the region;

(c) The United Nations Information Centre in Pretoria initiated a region-wide 2010 Human Rights Day video project involving the 16 United Nations information centres in sub-Saharan Africa. The centres were asked to interview and film human rights defenders focusing on the theme "Human rights defenders who act to end discrimination". The information centre in Pretoria compiled the submissions into five-minute video clips, which were placed on the websites of the information centres in Africa and distributed to other information centres and the United Nations human rights offices around the world;

(d) The United Nations Information Centre in Tokyo organizes weekly workshops on themes relating to United Nations information and documentation. Among the five types of workshops offered, one covers general United Nations information and documentation, while others focus on the Security Council, human rights, United Nations statistics, and Model United Nations programmes;

(e) The United Nations Information Service in Vienna, in December 2010, hosted an experimental "E-Lecture" organized by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in cooperation with the University of Vienna on the theme "Sport, violence and crime prevention", which was streamed live to universities around the world. Participants, ranging from Australia and Japan to Lithuania and Spain, were connected through the central E-Portal.

VI. From "United Nations Day" to "United Nations Week" — UN4U outreach

10. Many United Nations information centres have begun to organize United Nations Week, extending the observance of United Nations Day into one whole week in order to work more extensively with the United Nations country teams, Government ministries, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and other civil society actors. In 2010, 26 information centres organized United Nations Week, reaching over 85,000 students. Activities undertaken in this regard include the following:

(a) The United Nations Information Centre in Tripoli, in collaboration with the United Nations country team, organized a full week of activities to celebrate 60 years of United Nations cooperation with the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. The activities included a press conference, an "open house", an exhibit and a drawing competition for students;

(b) The United Nations Information Centre in Panama City launched United Nations Week with a flag-raising ceremony, followed by activities such as an "open house" with presentations, film screenings and an exhibition of information materials on the United Nations, human rights, the Millennium Development Goals and youth, as well as games and a Model United Nations programme;

(c) The United Nations Office in Yerevan, together with the United Nations Communications Group and other partners, organized activities for an entire week ranging from lectures, paintings on peace by children, a concert, and a Model United Nations programme, to the visit of the President of the Republic to the United Nations House. Prominent Armenian artists and singers also performed at a concert dedicated to United Nations Day at the National Theatre;

(d) The United Nations Information Centre in Harare, together with members of the United Nations country team, visited 38 primary and secondary schools located in 7 of the country's 10 provinces, reaching about 19,000 students. Their presentations were made in English and the local Shona and Ndebele languages. The information centre held a training session for United Nations country team officials on various issues, including frequently asked questions, and how to address them.

11. The United Nations Information Centre in Jakarta coordinated the first ever UN4U outreach campaign there in October 2010. The campaign involved the Resident Coordinator and other senior officials of the United Nations country team, who gave lectures and presentations to students and faculty members from dozens of academic institutions at nine different venues, reaching 3,800 participants. The information centre conducted a survey among approximately 1,000 participants, which clearly showed a marked improvement in their understanding about the work of the United Nations as a result of these programmes.

VII. Expanding the use of new information and communication technologies

A. United Nations information centre websites

12. All United Nations information centres have their own dedicated websites, some of which are supported by the webmasters at centres providing regional support. In 2010, approximately 7 million visits and over 33 million page views were recorded on the centres' websites. The website of the United Nations Information Service in Vienna topped all with 9.7 million page views, followed by those of the centres in Mexico City with 7.7 million page views, Brussels with 5.3 million page views, Warsaw with 2.2 million page views and Bogota with 2.1 million page views. While technical glitches affected some of the websites in 2010, these websites continue to be an important source of information on the United Nations.

13. The United Nations information centres web page, hosted on the United Nations website and available in all six official languages, remains a convenient gateway to all the websites of the information centres. It also provides detailed contact information and highlights activities of the information centres with blog stories and photos. In 2010, it registered approximately 650,000 page views in all languages.

B. Social networking tools and short message service campaigns

14. The use of the social networking tools such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Flickr by United Nations information centres continues to expand, reflecting the wider use of these tools by the public at large and younger audiences, in particular. They use not only the official languages of the Organization but also Czech, German, Japanese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovakian and Slovenian.

United Nations information centres with Facebook, Flickr, SMS, Twitter and YouTube, as of December 2010

Facebook (22)	Baku, Bogotá, Brussels, Bucharest, Buenos Aires, Cairo, Dar es Salaam, Jakarta, La Paz, Lima, Manila, Mexico City, New Delhi, Prague, Pretoria, Rio de Janeiro, Tokyo, Tunis, Vienna, Warsaw, Washington, D.C., and Yerevan
Flickr (2)	Bogotá, Colombo
SMS (1)	Manama
Twitter (16)	Bogotá, Brussels, Canberra, Colombo, Jakarta, La Paz, Mexico City, New Delhi, Rio de Janeiro, Tehran, Tokyo, Tunis, Vienna, Washington, D.C., Warsaw and Yerevan
YouTube (12)	Bogotá, Jakarta, Kathmandu, La Paz, Lima, Mexico City, Prague, Pretoria, Rio de Janeiro, Tokyo, Washington, D.C., and Yerevan

15. The United Nations Information Centre in Manama finalized an important arrangement with BATELCO, the leading phone company in Bahrain, allowing the centre to run an SMS (short message service) account free of charge. This offers an opportunity for the centre to send short texts containing excerpts of the Secretary-General's messages on international days to the mobile phones of several hundred thousand clients in the region and worldwide. The information centre used this new tool for the first time on United Nations Day 2010, sending a message in Arabic and English along with the United Nations web link to the BATELCO clients and others in the Gulf region and beyond.

VIII. Strengthening communications training and support

16. *Communications workshop in Cairo.* As part of the Department's continuing efforts to enhance the communications skills of the staff members of the United Nations information centres, a communications workshop for the Arab region took place in Cairo at the start of December 2010. It focused on practical skills and tools to deal strategically with the media, to build credibility and visibility for the Organization on a particular issue, to tailor messages to specific situations and deliver them effectively, to take advantage of the possibilities offered by social media; and to devise and implement communications strategies.

17. *Online distance training.* In an effort to assist United Nations information staff away from Headquarters in improving their web-writing skills, the Department once again worked with the Language and Communications Programme of the Office of Human Resources Management to organize an eight-session long-distance learning course called "Writing for the Web", which was conducted through the online collaboration tool WebEx. While the first pilot course in May-June 2010 involved 10 staff members of United Nations information centres, the second course in September-November 2010 was also opened to staff members in field missions. The Department will continue to explore the use of WebEx for conducting distance training and meetings and providing remote technical support for information centres.

IX. Ongoing challenges

18. Many United Nations information centres are in dire need of funding for maintenance and refurbishment of premises. With related costs such as rent, utilities, security and other charges increasing annually, fewer resources have been available for regular upkeep.

19. Bearing in mind such considerations, together with the goal of achieving greater coherence and delivering as one at the country level, the Department has been moving in the direction of having information centres share premises with other members of the United Nations country team, wherever feasible. While this has sometimes been by choice, on other occasions, it has been out of necessity.

20. Since the beginning of 2010, four United Nations information centres have relocated to joint premises (three as a result of security demands), while a fifth centre sublets part of its premises to a United Nations agency. This trend is expected to continue; where sharing premises is not an option, either owing to cost or lack of

space, the Department is exploring the possibility of reducing the physical space of the information centres as a means of curbing the associated costs. It is worth pointing out, however, that relocations and reductions in space are costly in the short term owing to the related fit-out and construction costs. Security requirements, in particular, pose an increasingly heavy burden, both with regard to non-recurrent installation costs and to ongoing charges for guarding, monitoring and communications.

Conclusions

In the past year, the Department of Public Information has made important advances. By prioritizing its thematic campaigns and enhancing its cooperation with United Nations system partners, the Department has been able to deliver its messages to its targeted audiences in the most cost-effective manner. A contributing factor to its success has been the effective use of complementary information and communications technologies, especially such social media tools as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Flickr. In the future, the use of social media will expand. However, using these tools effectively demands round-the-clock attention with dedicated staffing. As more and more campaigns make use of social media platforms, the Department will need to devote resources to collecting statistics and metrics in order to be able to analyse the impact of these tools. Another challenge will be to expand the reach of these tools in as many languages as possible.

The Department's ability to integrate the network of United Nations information centres in its promotional campaigns has also contributed to its growing success. The information centres have demonstrated that they play a valuable and effective role, working strategically with partners from both within and outside the United Nations system, to inform members of the public in their own languages about the work being done by the United Nations around the world. To this end, the Department will continue to improve the centres' capacity to play that role — involving them in the development of communications strategies and providing them with guidance and information material on priority issues, channelling seed money from other offices to them to help in their communications work on a designated topic, facilitating their relocation into premises shared with the rest of the United Nations country team, arranging for training — either in person or, increasingly, online — to enhance their communications skills, and seeking alternative ways to provide them with equipment upgrades.